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AUTHOR Keefe, Carolyn
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ABSTRACT

A study investigated evangelist Billy Graham's numerical success in using "the invitation" and the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association's (BGEA) follow-up plan to preserve the beneficial effects of Christian commitment and to minimize commitment attrition. Statistics on audience response gathered throughout Graham's ministry attest to the evangelist's unusual persuasive ability. Over two million "inquirers" have responded to the invitation for Christian commitment. Lay persons, clergy, Billy Graham, and his associates successfully use oral and written communication strategies to encourage "inquirers" to join a church, study the Bible, pray, and witness. The eight-component program includes personal counseling, Bible study correspondence, church follow-up, literature follow-up, the popular magazine "Decision," nurture groups, telephone follow-up, and a special follow-up tailored to the needs of a particular crusade area. Through the instructional components, Graham and his associates have become temporary teachers, and through their messages of encouragement they have become temporary pastors. These functions are then passed on to the local churches. A critical, summarizing study of commitment durability assessments appears to be called for, due to the considerable variance in methodological soundness and conclusions of current assessments. (Two figures illustrating phases of crusade organization and a crusade counselor's card are included; 52 notes are included.) (KEH)

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PRESERVING THE BENEFICIAL EFFECTS OF EVANGELISTIC PREACHING: BILLY GRAHAM'S FOLLOW-UP STRATEGIES

Carolyn Keefe

West Chester University

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ABSTRACT

Over two million "inquirers" have responded to evangelist Billy Graham's invitation for Christian commitment. Through an eight-component follow-up program, Graham attempts to minimize commitment attrition. Lay persons, clergy, Billy Graham, and his associates utilize oral and written communication strategies to encourage inquirers to join a church, study the Bible, pray, and witness. Assessments of commitment durability vary considerably in methodological soundness and in the conclusions, thereby demonstrating the need for a critical, summarizing study of the assessments.

PRESERVING THE BENEFICIAL EFFECTS OF EVANGELISTIC PREACHING: BILLY GRAHAM'S FOLLOW-UP STRATEGIES

Carolyn Keefe
West Chester University

Goals of the Evangelist

An evangelist who lives up to the name inherits clear persuasive goals. The name is derived from the New Testament Greek word εὐαγγελιστής, a bringer of good tidings[1] or one called to preach the gospel. As Richardson explains, the gospel is Christ himself, the living word:

> It is therefore supremely the message of the cross and Resurrection, and it is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Rom. 1.16) . . . . For those who thus receive it [by faith] the gospel is always "news", breaking in freshly upon them and convincing them afresh, though they may first have heard it and accepted it long ago.[2]

The evangelist, then, through the proclamation of the gospel has two main purposes: to win converts to the Christian faith and to revive dormant believers--in short, to gain beneficial effects.

This paper deals with one aspect of Billy Graham's evangelism--preserving the beneficial effects of the proclamation. It focuses on Graham's persuasion at the points where results are most measurable, namely, right after the formulated, direct audience appeal and during later reassessment of response. Having identified the above goals of evangelism, the study will now address these questions: What is the purpose of the evangelist's direct audience appeal?

Numerically how successful has been Graham's use of the appeal? What questions of concern have surfaced from Graham's numerical success with the appeal? What has been Graham's programmatic answer to the concerns? How successful has the program been?

Use of the Invitation in Evangelism

The method used by the evangelist for eliciting a public response from the two target groups--the unbelievers and the backsliders--is known as "the invitation" or "the altar call." Popularized during the last century by Charles G. Finney,[3] it can be defined as "a call at the conclusion of meetings for people to come to the front to express their willingness to accept Christ, for salvation, to show rededication, to receive healing, or to give themselves for service, or for any other reason."[4] Usually the evangelist extends the invitation in segments that sequentially focus on a particular religious state such as unbelief, diminished fervor, or lack of consecration.[5] While live background music is played, the speaker warns, exhorts, encourages, and invites.[6] Between each segment, as respondents move toward the front of the facility, the choir or audience softly sings an invitational hymn, perhaps the oft-used "Just as I Am without One Plea." During the invitation some evangelists are aided by "personal workers," individuals who, from the vantage point of the aisles, speak directly with attendees about their spiritual condition and urge those who have not made a decision for Christ to delay no longer. In Billy Graham crusades pretrained counselors, pairing themselves with respondents who are known as "inquirers,"[7] follow them to the designated area where registration and counseling take place.

Eventually the evangelist brings the invitation to a close.[8] How many individuals have heeded the directive "leave your seats and join me in the front" becomes one index of the persuader's success.

Graham's Numerical Success

The achievement record for using the invitation, as well as for attracting audiences and itinerating, belongs to Billy Graham. In 1988, the year of Graham's seventieth birthday, Kantzer claimed:

> History will remember Billy Graham as the world's greatest missionary-evangelist. No other person has preached the gospel face-to-face to so many--over 100 million. No other person has led so many to make explicit spiritual decisions, usually to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior--over two million. And no other person has traveled to so many countries to preach the gospel--more than 65.[9]

Statistics on audience response, gathered throughout Graham's ministry, attest to the evangelist's unusual persuasive ability. During the 1949 Los Angeles campaign that made him a celebrity,[10] 2,703 "decisions for Christ" and 1,475 "reconsecrations" were recorded from a total attendance of 350,000.[11] Forty years later at the final meeting of Budapest '89, more than 27,000 from a ninety-thousand audience came forward on the playing field of People's Stadium.[12] The recorded number of responses during the intervening years lends support to Kantzer's attribution of over two million decisions to Graham.[13] The figures also objectify the recollections of former evangelist Templeton:

> When it came to the altar call, nobody could touch him. Billy would invariably have more people come forward than anybody else would. It would amaze us.[14]

Without doubt the massive numbers of people that Graham has

been able to attract to the crusades and the altar have contributed to his stellar reputation that over the years has placed him more frequently on George Gallup's "most admired person" poll than any other individual[15] and recently earned him a footprint on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.[16] In a popular sense the crowds have been a plus for Graham because not only do names but numbers make news, as Wirt illustrates in the following account:

> Each evening the [crusade] team's press department would post on the Cow Palace press room door the number of people attending, the number of decisions reported and the number of buses parked outside. The newspapers faithfully published the totals; two San Francisco papers, the Call-Bulletin and the News, actually ran a daily "Graham Box Score" so their readers could check on how Billy was "doing."[17]

Scrutiny of Graham's Numerical Success with the Invitation

But along with the headline coverage that has publicized his ministry have come nagging questions about the nature and significance of the unrelenting flow to the front. Among the questions are these: To what extent does crowd psychology operate in commitment making? How does Graham's ethos affect the decisions? What impact does the work of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association have on the number of responses?[18] How does the national milieu affect the efficacy of the invitation?[19] Do the respondents understand the choice they purportedly are making? How many of the responses actually represent conversions to Christ? How many of the decisions result in the attitudinal and behavioral changes that indicate a growing Christian life of fellowship, witness, and service?

Even though all the above questions are important in understanding how persuasion functions in the crusade setting, the last one, which concerns long-term beneficial effects of responding to Christ through the invitation, is the most critical to the present study. Raised in various forms, it occurs frequently in the Graham literature. For example, "What are the measurable results one year later?" asks Fitt in regard to the 1953 Detroit campaign?[20] "Does It Last?" serves as the chapter title for High's answer to his own question.[21] "Do the results match up to the claims made for them?" is Hulse's way of leading into an informal poll of Wembly Stadium attendees.[22] A Look reporter imbeds the basic question in a charge to Graham: "The criticism is often leveled at you that your 'converts' don't last."[23] For Graham and his organization, of course, the question could not be ignored.

Graham's Answer to the Question about Long-term Effects

Graham's replies in the Look magazine interview, which took place early in his career (1956), show his concern for both theological and programmatic approaches to the problem of preserving decisions, no matter whether they involve initial or renewed commitment to Christ. His points pertinent to this concern are paraphrased below:

1. Only Christ can change lives. I cannot convert anybody but serve as only a human instrument, relying on the Holy Spirit to complete the work.

2. To win those lost to Christ and the church is the purpose

of evangelism. Bringing back a person to Christ and the church is just as important as winning a new convert because both need to be changed by Christ.

3. Many who have made a public confession at our meetings have demonstrated positive changes in their lives. Files in our Minneapolis office contain thousands of letters from ministers expressing appreciation for newly confessed Christians in their churches.

4. Failure to carry out a faith commitment is not solely a crusade problem; it afflicts churches no less than crusades.

5. Through an extensive follow-up program the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association is doing everything within its power to keep commitment failure to a minimum.[24]

The extensive follow-up system to which Graham referred above grew out of a critical situation. Like evangelists before him,[25] Graham was disturbed by the attrition rate among the professed converts. In his early campaigns his reinforcement attempts consisted of oral instruction: read the Bible daily; pray faithfully; witness for Christ; live a consistent Christian life; and, if not a member, join a church.[26] Follow-up, whenever it occurred, was done by pastors who, sensing the need and without help from the Graham organization, took the initiative. The apathy and lack of leadership in many churches led to the drift and diffusion of inquirers. Clearly the problem needed attention.

The person selected to address the need was the founder of The Navigators, a disciplined group that emphasizes Scripture

memorization and one-on-one evangelism. Dawson Trotman, "a brilliant strategist, but less of a tactician,"[27] was the architect of the follow-up plan, but the development and application were carried on by Lorne Sanny and Charlie Riggs. By 1952 the major features of a plan that enabled Graham to delegate responsibility were in place. Thirty-two years later, in reflecting on the program, Graham commented, "As times have changed we have tried hard--and with much prayer--to adapt and revise the methods we have learned over nearly four decades of Crusade evangelism. We have made many mistakes--but we have always tried to learn from our mistakes."[28]

The perfected follow-up program used by Graham is part of an integrated concept of crusade management consisting of four phases: Organization, Recruitment, Training, and Function.[29] (See the Appendix for a time line diagram of the phases.) Although follow-up occurs in the fourth phase, its roots, as will be shown, grow from the previous three. Most importantly, each phase and component part form an organic whole directed toward realizing the Christ-centered and church-centered goals struck in the interview cited previously and embodied in the BGEA's definition of crusade:

> A series of mass evangelism meetings and complementary events, featuring a BGEA evangelist, musicians, and special guests. The focus of each meeting is an evangelistic message concluded by a challenge to make a personal decision to follow Jesus Christ. The goal of the crusade is to mobilize the Christian community to join with the evangelist in proclaiming the Christian Gospel, thus proclaiming Christ and strengthening local congregations.[30]

The crusade work is carried out through cooperation between the BGEA Crusade Team, the local Crusade Executive Committee, and the Crusade

Congregational Committee formed in every participating church.

Specifically the follow-up program is designed to give "continued attention to a new Christian . . . while he is being integrated into the church, discovering his place of service, developing his full potential for Jesus Christ, and beginning to help build Christ's Church."[31] Finding its rationale in the New Testament concept of special functions within the church[32] and its model of love and concern in St. Paul,[33] the program utilizes the eight strategies described below, each one geared toward "turning decisions into disciples."[34]

1. Personal Counseling. Recruitment of the thousands of counselors needed for a crusade begins approximately four months before the evangelistic meetings, and training starts about three months in advance.[35] Those who attend a minimum of three out of the four Christian Life and Witness classes, which are taught by BGEA personnel,[36] may apply to be counselors. The selection factors include the quality of the candidate's application, homework assignments, and interview.[37]

When appointed, the counselor has the responsibility of making direct contacts with inquirers. As noted earlier, during the invitation each counselor follows an inquirer to the designated location. At the close of the meeting the counselor gives the inquirer a card on which to indicate the type of decision: acceptance of Christ, assurance of salvation, rededication, other. (See Appendix for a sample card.) The counselor then adapts the advice to the expressed need. An aid in this process is the training course manual, which provides prescriptive approaches. Using

additional information entered on the registration card (name, address, phone number), the counselor is expected to make a second contact within forty-eight hours by phoning, writing, or visiting the inquirer. Lastly, the counselor files a report with the BGEA office.

2. Bible Study Correspondence. Upon making a decision, each inquirer receives the correspondence booklet Living in Christ, its bright blue cover displaying a single sea gull in flight. The booklet has a unique design. Both covers have double folds that can be detached, the front containing the Gospel of John and the back a postcard Certificate of Completion addressed to the BGEA Follow-Up Department. Inside the booklet are these parts: the inquirer's registration card; sixteen perforated Scripture memory verse cards and an envelope for carrying them (a feature inherited from The Navigators); instructions for using all the material; "A Word of Encouragement from Billy Graham" on developing a Christian life; and four basic Bible studies entitled "Knowing Christ," "Growing in Christ," "Obeying Christ," and "Sharing Christ." To insure that no points in the lesson are missed, suggested answers appear at the end of the booklet. Primarily the packet is aimed at grounding the user in the Christian faith, but it also contributes to organizational record keeping.

3. Church Follow-Up. This strategy links the inquirer with a local church. If the person already has an affiliation, that tie is respected. If not, a referral is made on the basis of information obtained from the registration card; this action is not a mandate but a means of follow-up.[38] From information mailed the very night of the decision, the church receiving it is requested to contact the inquirer--through the pastor or a designee--within seventy-two hours. The message is to be one of encouragement

toward Christian growth within the supportive church community.

4. Literature Follow-Up. Within a few days after the inquirer has made a commitment, he or she receives a letter from Graham. The letter further encourages the person to take the basic growth steps taught in the Living in Christ booklet.

5. Decision. Begun by Graham in 1960 as a popular magazine to present clear Christian teaching,[39] Decision is sent free of charge to every inquirer for a year. It runs messages by Graham, inspirational articles, Bible studies, worldwide Christian news, BGEA crusade reports, and testimonies from inquirers.

6. Nurture Groups. This strategy, like that of counseling, ties into the crusade training period. Meeting in groups of ten, hundreds of Christians study the nurture group lessons and learn group leadership techniques. These individuals later become leaders of the inquirer nurture groups.

Meeting on a regular basis, the nurture groups have both study and support functions. Members covenant to work on Bible study lessons that include topics such as assurances of salvation, biblical authority, effective prayer, walking in the Spirit, and witnessing. They also support each other through prayer and discussing their faith experience.

7. Telephone Follow-Up. As a preventative against contact failure, the plan uses a telephone survey. Conducted by a trained worker, the call occurs within three weeks after the crusade and goes to the inquirer whose age is above twelve. The interviewer asks questions about the inquirer's Christian growth and gives help where needed, stressing the importance of participation in a

nurture Bible study group and a local church.

8. Special Follow-Up. Tailored to the needs of a particular crusade area, this strategy can vary from dorm Bible studies to one-day personal-enrichment seminars. The women who during the training phase were involved in the crusade prayer meetings are asked to continue them and invite inquirers into their fellowship.

As can be seen, the follow-up strategies for each crusade require the well-orchestrated cooperation of professional religious workers and laypersons. Although the BGEA lends its support through the program design, training, supervision, and instructional materials it provides, the main responsibility for nurturing the thousands of inquirers rests with the local congregations. Therefore, how ably the churches can marshall the needed caring and instruction, as well as opportunities for leadership and outreach, significantly influences the growth of the inquirers.[40] In this vein Bell notes, "The conservation or non-conservation of converts will reflect the virility of the churches to which Billy Graham has entrusted them."[41]

Assessment of Crusade Effects

After the crusade is over and Graham and the BGEA staff have left the city, what are the net effects of the crusade? Opinions abound on this matter and come from the theological left and the right, from those who merely guess the results and those who measure them, from those who share their personal experience and those who infer responses in others.[42] Most of the assessments concern the impact of the crusade as a whole upon the inquirers, the church, and the community. Even when follow-up is mentioned specifically, the extent to which it, apart from other causes,

produced the effects is not clear. As might be expected, the conclusions about the influence of the crusades veer in opposite directions.

Critics of Graham's evangelistic efforts most frequently argue along these lines: the crusades do not reach the masses; most of the attendees are already church members; the decisions for Christ are not lasting; and the crusades do not produce significant church membership gains. Twelve months after the 1953 Detroit crusade, Fitt conducted a survey that led him to this conclusion: "On the basis of the usable replies received from almost 30 per cent of the Protestant pastors of metropolitan Detroit, . . . it is possible to state, first, that the lasting significance of the card-signing phase as at present organized is vastly exaggerated; and second, that extremely few local churches were strengthened spiritually by the campaign."[43]

Among those claiming that Graham's crusades exert only minimal effect is McLoughlin. After analyzing BGEA crusade statistics, published comments, records, and studies, and the findings of his own spot-check at the 1957 New York crusade, he made the following claim:

> Graham's crusades seemed capable of influencing only those already committed to his religious outlook. They reached a few backsliders, a few occasional churchgoers, a large number of youngsters in Sunday schools who were already on the way to church membership, and a few unhappy people who came in search of an answer to their personal problems. But their impact upon the community at large was superficial and ephemeral.[44]

Arn, who serves as president of the Institute for American Church Growth, has little confidence in the ability of the Graham Crusades to generate church members. Having polled 14,000 lay-

persons on how they came to faith in Christ and church membership, he reports that only 5 percent of the subjects gave credit to evangelistic campaigns.[45] This low figure reflects Arn's 1977 study of Graham's 1976 Seattle/Tacoma crusade in which he found that only 15 percent of the inquirers making first-time decisions for Christ were added to the church rolls.[46]

In the Graham literature there is no scarcity of rebuttalists. One appeared during the 1950s, the period from which McLoughlin drew much of his evidence. High, who was commissioned by the Reader's Digest to determine the effect of Graham's crusades, used direct observation and interviewing. From his two-year study here and abroad, he reports:

> In every [U.S.] city I found, as I had found in Great Britain, men and women who, since the Billy Graham Crusade and because of it, were doing much more than carrying on; who had not only caught the Christian contagion, but had made it catching; individuals in the first-century tradition who, beginning with themselves, were turning their worlds--small worlds though they often were--"upside down."[47]

Ferm, a Graham associate who for over eighteen years collected data on conversions, surveyed 14,000 inquirers from four continents. He found that prior to the crusades 46 percent of the sample had been unchurched.[48] He also corresponded widely with Christian leaders who were in a position to evaluate the influence of the crusades. Comments such as these are typical of the mail response: "Some of the fruit was so permanent that they [pastors] are still happy about it several years after the campaigns were held;" "The training of local counselors and advisors was a great help to the local churches;" and "By stirring up ministers and their people to their responsibility for Christian witness, he [Graham] has

given impetus to evangelism where it is most important--at the community and person-to-person level."[49] Ferm's research, then, shows that a sizable proportion of those making inquiry had no church affiliation and that the crusades had a salutary effect on church life.

Work done by Firebaugh has particular relevance to the present study for two reasons: (1) its seven-page survey includes items regarding follow-up, and (2) it was conducted after the follow-up program had been well-established, thus providing a consistent base for study. Begun three and a half years after the 1976 greater Seattle crusade, the study measured perceptions of long-term crusade effects. From ministers, lay leaders (crusade congregational chairpersons), and inquirers connected with the crusade, the sample of 1,010 was selected randomly. Only 673 persons from this sample could be located and surveyed. Four hundred and twenty-one completed surveys were received, providing a return rate of 55 percent for the clergy, 76 percent for the lay leaders, and 60 percent for the inquirers.

The data on follow-up and the inquirers generally present a positive view of the crusade. In regard to follow-up, it was judged effective by these percentages of respondents: on training for evangelism--ministers, 48 percent, and lay leaders, 75 percent; on training for counseling--ministers, 55 percent, and lay leaders, 82 percent; on preparing your church for follow-up--ministers, 33 percent, and lay leaders, 62 percent. When the inquirers were asked about the effect of their commitment on their lives, 82 percent chose "positive" or "very positive," 15 percent said "no effect,"

and only 3 percent claimed "negative" or "very negative." From a supplementary survey sent to ministers of the 50 churches receiving the most inquirer referrals, Firebaugh found that the ministers perceived the crusade as having a lasting positive effect on 67 percent of the inquirers referred to them. Thus, both the inquirers who experienced the commitment and the ministers who observed the inquirers generally agreed that the crusade had reaped beneficial results for the inquirers. Not only on the dimensions mentioned above but on the findings as a whole, Firebaugh remarks:

> Local church leaders give the 1976 Seattle/Tacoma Billy Graham crusade relatively high marks in most areas. Lay leaders are even more positive than ministers. Among both ministers and lay leaders, participants are much more positive than nonparticipants.[50]

Has the follow-up program achieved its stated goal of integrating new Christians into the life of the church, of turning decisions into disciples? Although the extent to which the program <u>in and of itself</u> has produced the desired effects cannot be claimed with any certainty (due to the lack of studies isolating that particular variable), there are indications that the crusades as a whole have carried out their purposes. First, there are voluminous testimonials from inquirers who claim that the crusades were instrumental in their Christian commitment or recommitment.[51] Second, thousands of pastors and other workers associated with the crusades attest to the impact of the crusades on individuals and the church. One such person is the Most Reverend Robert Runcie, Archbishop of Canterbury who, in giving his support to the Billy Graham Mission '89, said, "The fruits of his previous visits are to be found in the thousands of committed members of our congregations for whom his presentation of the Gospel was a turning point."[52] The

accumulation of these perceptions, even though gathered unsystematically for the most part, lend the distinct impression of crusade effectiveness.

Conclusion

The inconsistency of the findings and the varying quality of the assessments reported in this paper and elsewhere show the need for a critical, summarizing study of crusade effectiveness. Such a study would be complex, requiring not only expertise in research methodology but an understanding of the theology and psychology of religious experience. The fact that Graham has preached in sixty-five countries, many with church demographics quite different from those of this country, would compound the problem of data interpretation. Given the difficulty of the task, the project will not be forthcoming. Yet without a comprehensive study, the existing assessments--no matter what their quality--serve as acceptable, though unevaluated evidence for those wanting to make a point.

Even without a definitive view of the impact of his crusades, Billy Graham, who is content to leave the final outcome to God, continues to preach the gospel to the end that new converts are won and lethargic believers are rejuvenated. Following the practice of evangelists from the past century, he uses the invitation as a means for hearers to come forward and make a public commitment to Christ. Throughout his career Graham has been unusually successful in issuing this call. Concerned about the need for preserving the beneficial effects of evangelistic preaching, he authorized the development of a follow-up plan that, as it evolved from the early 1950s, consists of eight components and

requires the close cooperation between his organization and volunteer clergy and laypersons from the crusade area. By enacting this plan, Graham and his associates have gone beyond the two goals of the evangelist. Through the instructional components, they have become temporary teachers, and through their messages of encouragement, they have become temporary pastors--temporary until they can pass on these functions to the local churches where nurture best belongs and where it succeeds or fails.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, corrected ed. (1889), s.v. εὐαγγελιστής.

[2]Alan Richardson, ed., A Theological Word Book of the Bible (New York: Macmillan Co., 1950), 100.

[3]See Charles G. Finney, Memoirs of Charles G. Finney (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1876), 288-90.

[4]Erroll Hulse, The Great Invitation: Examining the Use of the Invitation System in Evangelism (Welwyn, Hertfordshire, England: Evangelical Press, 1986), 7.

[5]For an example of a typical Billy Graham invitation, see Curtis Mitchell, God in the Garden: The Story of the Billy Graham New York Crusade (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co., 1957) 135-36. Hulse, 99-100, briefly describes Graham's approach to the invitation.

[6]The persuasive advantage of using a specific conclusion is discussed in Stewart L. Tubbs, "Explicit verses Implicit Conclusions and Audience Commitment," Speech Monographs 35 (March 1968): 14-19. In Memoirs, 288-89, Finney discusses his rationale for making a commitment public. For a discussion of the reinforcing effect of commitment, see Carl I. Hovland, Irving L. Janis, and Harold H. Kelly, Communication and Persuasion (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953; reprint, West Port, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1982), 100-105 (page references are to reprint edition). Robert B. Cialdini, Influence: Science and Practice, 2d ed. (Glenview, Ill.: Scott, Foresman and Co., 1988), 59-105, discusses commitment as the key to persuasion.

[7]Glossary of Terms, "Guide to Processed Collections in the Archives of the Billy Graham Center with Information on the Ministry of Billy Graham and/or the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association," 14. Archives of the Billy Graham Center, Wheaton, Illinois.

[8]See Hulse, pp. 172-76 for twenty-two reasons why (according to R. T. Kendall) the invitation is a helpful practice. Hulse disagrees and offers his rebuttal.

[9]Kenneth S. Kantzer, "The Evangelist of Our Time," Christianity Today 32 (November 18, 1988): 14. For information on Graham's life and work, see writings of his authorized biographer, John Pollock, Billy Graham (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1966); Billy Graham: Evangelist to the World (San Francisco: Harper & Row Publishers, 1979); and To All the Nations: The Billy Graham Story (San Francisco: Harper & Row Publishers, 1985).

[10]For an account of the Los Angeles campaign and publisher William Randolph Hearst's "Puff Graham" directive, see Stanley High, Billy Graham: The Personal Story of the Man, His Message, and His Mission (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1956), 147-50; and William G. McLoughlin, Jr., Billy Graham: Revivalist in a Secular Age (New York: Ronald Press Co., 1960), 45-51.

[11]McLoughlin, 51.

[12]Edward E. Plowman, "Budapest '89 with Billy Graham: A New Era in Hungary," Decision 30 (November 1989): 7. This article includes an annotated calendar of Billy Graham's nine previous incursions into Eastern Europe, beginning as early as 1977.

[13]For statistics on the 1954 Greater London Crusade, see Frank Colquhoun, Harringay Story (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1955), 231-35; on the 1955 Great Britain and European Crusade, George Burnham, Billy Graham: A Mission Accomplished (Westwood, N.J.: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1955), 157-58; on the 1957 New York Crusade, Mitchell, 177; on the 1958 San Francisco Bay Cities Crusade, Sherwood Eliot Wirt, Crusade at the Golden Gate (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1959), 148; on the 1966 Southern Piedmont Crusade, Lewis F. Brabham, A New Song in the South: The Story of the Billy Graham Greenville, S.C. Crusade (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Publishing House, 1966), 127; on the 1984 Missions in England, Derek Williams, One in a Million: The Story of Billy Graham's Missions in England during 1984 (Berkhamsted, Herts, England: Word Books, 1984), 183-85; on the 1985 Los Angeles Crusade, "Billy Graham's Los Angeles Crusade Evokes Memories of His 1949 Tent Meeting," Christianity Today 29(September 6, 1985): 58-59.

[14]Marshall Frady, Billy Graham: A Parable of American Righteousness (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1979), 163.

[15]IMS News, Radio Station WDAC, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, October 15, 1989.

[16]Report, "Hour of Decision," Radio Station WDAC, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, October 15, 1989. Graham, taking advantage of every opportunity to preach the gospel, made that a stipulation in his acceptance of the honor. Special stands had to be built to hold the crowds that came to hear his message and witness the celebration. The star itself was awarded for his work in radio, film, and television.

[17]Wirt, 148.

[18]For an overview of how the BGEA is related to every aspect of crusade management, see Loren Dickinson, "The Billy Graham Crusade: An Analysis of Crusade Organization" (Ph.D. diss., University of Denver, 1968).

[19]See William Thomas, An Assessment of Mass Meetings as a Method of Evangelism--Case Study of Eurofest '75 and the Billy Graham Crusade in Brussels (Amsterdam, The Netherlands: Rodopi, 1977).

[20]Frank Fitt, "In the Wake of Billy Graham," Christian Century 71(December 1, 1954): 1458.

[21]High, 217.

[22]Erroll Hulse, Billy Graham: The Pastor's Dilemma. (Hounslow, Middlesex, England: Maurice Alan Publishers, 1966), 11.

[23]"Billy Graham Answers His Critics," Look 20(February 7, 1956): 47.

[24]Ibid., 47-48. For Graham's views on theology and Christian growth, see W. David Lockyard, The Unheard Billy Graham (Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1971), 49-87.

[25]A comprehensive, well-researched study of revivals in the United States since 1825 is William G. McLoughlin, Jr., Modern Revivalism: Charles Grandison Finney to Billy Graham (New York: Ronald Press Co., 1959). The author's implied prediction that Graham's popularity would last about ten years (based on an analogy involving Finney, Moody, Jones, and Sunday) warrants re-assessment in light of Graham's four decades of international prominence. See 521-22.

[26]John Pollock, Crusades: 20 Years with Billy Graham (Minneapolis: World Wide Publications, 1969), 114.

[27]Ibid., 117.

[28]Sterling W. Huston, Crusade Evangelism and the Local Church (Minneapolis: World Wide Publications, 1984), 10. Unless noted otherwise, the information on Graham's follow-up program comes from this book. The author has served as the BGEA's Director of Crusades for North America since 1974.

[29]For a five-stage campaign model that has conceptual parallels to but uses different terminology than the Graham model, see Herbert W. Simons, Persuasion: Understanding, Practice, and Analysis, 2d ed. (New York: Random House, 1986), 228-42.

[30]Glossary of Terms, "Guide to Collections in Archives," 13.

[31]Huston, 114.

[32]See Eph. 4:11-13 TLB.

[33]See Gal. 4:19 Williams (Paul's concern over Christian development); 1 Thess. 2:8 Williams (his willingness at all costs to help new believers); 2 Cor. 2:9 KJV, 1 Thess. 3:10 KJV, 1 Thess. 3:1-3 Williams (his letters, prayers, and visitation on behalf of young churches).

[34]See Huston, 113-32. The phrase comes from a chapter heading.

[35]Figures from the three-month Mission England 1984 show the magnitude of the counselor operation. From the 49,980 persons attending the training classes, 19,548 were selected as counselors. See Williams, 185.

[36]Charles Riggs and others, Billy Graham's Christian Life & Witness Course (Minneapolis: World Wide Publications, 1988). For counseling approaches to a wide variety of problems, see Charles G. Ward, The Billy Graham Christian Worker's Handbook: A Layman's Guide for Soul Winning and Personal Counseling (Minneapolis: World Wide Publications, 1984).

[37]For details of the counselor training and selection process as well as the counselor's role in follow-up, see Dickinson, 163-90. One change since this 1968 study is that a physical handicap no longer excludes a person from serving as a counselor. Catherine E. Wood, Executive Assistant to Sterling W. Huston, telephone interview by author, 21 August 1989.

[38]In Billy Graham: Saint or Sinner (Old Tappan, N.J.: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1979), 278, Curtis Mitchell describes the staggering nightly task of processing the decision cards during the 1978 Manila Crusade. On issues concerning church referral, see Huston, 126-29.

[39]Pollock, Billy Graham (1966), 240-42.

[40]An old volume by William B. Sprague, Lectures on Revivals of Religion (Albany: Packard & Van Benthuysen, Printers, 1832), acknowledges the vital role of instruction in preserving converts from the 1820s revivals. See the letters from the Reverends Joel Hawes and Alexander Proudfit, Appendix, 59-60,82. This volume is housed in the Mudd Learning Center, Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio.

[41]L. Nelson Bell, "Billy Graham's Impact on New York," Christianity Today 1(September 16, 1957): 33.

[42]Perhaps the most striking case of inferring inquirer intention appears in Hulse, Pastor's Dilemma, 11: "The motives for their coming forward. . .were puzzling to me. The majority seemed themselves to be confused. The absence of conviction of sin was marked and disturbing."

[43]Fitt, 1459.

[44]McLoughlin, Billy Graham, 193.

[45]Russell T. Hitt, "Diversity Marks U.S. Evangelism Methods," Eternity 38(September 1987): 34-35. Other causative factors are: special need, 1-2%; walk-in, 2-3%; pastor, 5-6%; visitation, 1-2%; Sunday school, 4-5%; church program, 2-3%; friends/relatives, 75-90%. An earlier report of Arn's, based on responses from more than 10,000 subjects, states that crusades account for only .01% of the influence. See Glen Firebaugh, "How Effective Are City-wide Crusades?" Cristianity Today 25(March 27, 1981): 26.

[46]Firebaugh, 28, reports this finding and challenges it on the basis that: (1) many of the new Christians already were church members, and (2) the Arn survey ignores the possible role of the crusade in preventing membership loss in a year characterized nationally by severe drops. The present author questions how Arn can derive percentages totaling 100 from nondiscrete categories. Rarely, if ever, can a church member point to a single influence affecting the decision to unite with a congregation.

[47]High, 252. Also see Stanley High, "Do Billy Graham's Crusades Have a Lasting Effect?" Reader's Digest 67(September 1955): 77-82.

[48]Huston, 146. For evidence that supports seven benefits accruing from the Graham crusades, see 133-50. Some of the case histories of inquirers are included in Robert O. Ferm, Persuaded to Live: Conversion Stories from the Billy Graham Crusades (Westwood, N.J.: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1958).

[49]In succession, Myron F. Boyd to Robert O. Ferm, October 6, 1959; Thelma R. Funderburk to Robert O. Ferm, November 9, 1959; Russell T. Hitt to Robert O. Ferm, November 6, 1959. Folder 6, Box 10, Collection 19. Archives of the Billy Graham Center, Wheaton, Illinois. An address, "Six Months After Billy Graham," given by the Reverend Gordon Powell on October 8, 1959, details the results of the Sydney crusade: increase in church membership, Bible study, church unity, and media coverage of religion. Found in Ibid.

[50]Firebaugh, 29.

[51]"Where Are They Now?" is a monthly feature of Decision. It carries the Christian development stories of crusade inquirers. Pollock, Billy Graham (1966), 257, claims that the BGEA files "spill over with letters and testimonies." For some stories of converts, see Ibid., 56-61; Colquhoun, 205-30; and Charles T. Cook, London Hears Billy Graham: The Greater London Crusade (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1954), 111-17.

[52]Brad Lewis, "Mission '89: Reaching out to London and Beyond," Decision 30 (June 1989): 18.

APPENDIX

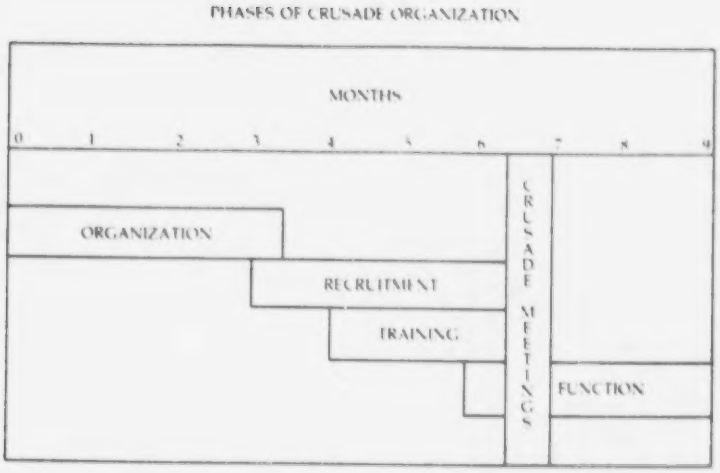

Figure 1.
Huston, 90.

BILLY GRAHAM CRUSADE COUNSELOR'S CARD
(PLEASE PRINT PLAINLY WITHIN THE BLOCKS)

☐ Miss
☐ Mrs
☐ Mr _____ Age _____
(Last Name) (First Name) (Middle Initial)

Street and Number _____ Phone _____
(where you receive your mail) (Number) (Street)

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Check one: ☐ **Acceptance of Christ** ☐ **Assurance of Salvation** ☐ **Rededication** ☐ **Other**

Religious background or denomination _____

Name of church attended REGULARLY
or church inviting to Crusade _____

Church Street and Number _____
(Number) (Street)

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Minister's Name _____

Inquirer's Occupation _____ Position Held _____

Student, where? _____ City _____
(Name of School)

Counselor _____
(This copy retained by counselor)

Counselor's Follow Up Reminder

☐ ☐ Phone call
☐ ☐ Letter sent
Comments _____

☐ ☐ Attending church
☐ ☐ First Lesson Completed

☐ ☐ Nurture Group
☐ ☐ Counselor report mailed

Figure 2.